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Rethinking Ideological Interpellation: An Althusserian Interpretation of Nadia's Subordination in Mohsin Hamid's Exit West

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ABSTRACT

Female oppression does not occur only through physical constraints by men. Certain invisible power structures, such as the ideologies working through family and religion, are responsible for subordinating women. All previous studies analyze Nadia's character generally, irrespective of the ideological influences that subjugate her. The following study employed Louis Althusser's Ideological State Apparatuses as a theoretical framework to examine the workings of ideological institutions that pave the way for the internalization of patriarchal standards, thereby positioning this current paper as a step ahead of conventional discussions of female oppression. Through a qualitative textual analysis of the novel, the character of Nadia has been examined by relating her to the real-life issues of women's subordination. For this purpose, the study posits four research questions that include the role of family, religion, and moral conscience in subordinating Nadia and how she withstands them. The findings aim to show how far patriarchal values work through societal institutions with a motive to control her agency.

Keywords: Ideological Interpellation, Family, Religion, Patriarchy, Moral Conscience, Resistance.

Introduction

Exit West deals with how the religious, societal, and patriarchal institutions shape the identities of individuals to subjugate and dominate them. The fictional characters in this literary work often relate to real-life issues concerning the dynamics of power and gender. The power structures influence individuals and their thinking processes. The way these power structures ascribe ideological insights to different genders

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paves the way for gender hierarchy.

Marxism, dividing individuals into different labor classes, shows ideology as a tool used by capitalist societies to establish and re-strengthen their control over the members of society. Keeping this framework of using ideology, power, and domination as a tool of exploitation, the current study examines the role of institutions in subordinating Nadia. Capitalist ideology works to restrain her freedom. Ideology combines the elements of capitalism and patriarchy and marks this domination as natural or normal. Family and religion interpellate her and reinforce her submissive behavior to sustain patriarchal power. She exhibits how institutions work to maintain women as subjects through internalized ideologies. Louis Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* has been applied to the character of Nadia to show her subordination to the ideological hegemony throughout her journey before and during migration.

Mohsin Hamid, in his fourth novel *Exit West* (2017), explores the theme of migration through magical doors. The characters break the legal or political borders by asserting their agency beyond the conventionalities. The novel has been reviewed concerning different literary theories and many other core issues. Feminism has been the key framework dealt with in the current novel. The magical doors in the novel serve as the invisible doors that allow individuals to escape not only from war and its crises but also from the ideological boundaries that encage their freedom. Through a feminist lens, Nadia exhibits the characteristics of a bold female. She has the traits of a masculine female (Wahla & Asif, 2020) who resists the patriarchal norms. Several researchers have also analyzed her as a female who is subjugated under patriarchy.

Michael Foucault's *"Panopticon"* has been applied to the character of Nadia (Farhan et al., 2024). Surveillance, the violence committed by the state, is prominent in the novel. These different approaches prevail in the novel. Although power has also been discussed in the novel, the way the Marxist conception of ideology functions as a tool to enforce Nadia's subjection in a patriarchal society has not been explored by any researcher before, so this aspect is aimed to be explored in this work.

Louis Althusser, a neo-Marxist

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(Althusser, 2014), discusses the role of institutions in shaping the identity of an individual. Ideology works through the consent of the individuals, making them believe that the actions are based on their free will. Althusser, in his ISAs, argues that individuals living in a society act according to those embedded values which are spontaneously followed by people as part of their moral duty. They perform actions as decent people, as in the words of Althusser, in his chapter "*On Ideology*", where he says that people perform actions and act upon the set ideologies because these ideologies teach them to be obedient to their God, love their neighbor, etc (Althusser, 1974, p. 197, *On The Reproduction of Capitalism*).

Althusser states that, according to German Ideology, ideology is a hollow vision and a complete reverie. It is not something that is concrete, but rather exists as a concept of the dream, as was believed by authors before Freud. Althusser says that this imaginary ideology acts on a concrete level, on individuals, in their daily lives, their acts and performances, and even in their doubts. The expression of "ideology" was coined by Cabanis and Destutt de Tray, meaning the theory of ideas. Karl Marx gave a different turn to ideology, that is, it is a system of ideas that dominates the minds of individuals in a social group. Althusser gives reference to Plato, who believed that Beautiful Lies should be told to people so that there would not be any need to keep a guardian in their minds to monitor them. Concerning the ideology of religion, the subject surrounds itself with an infinity of subjects to practice its own authority. Such an image is given to make the subjects believe that it is about them, and if they remain obedient, they will be among the superior ones in front of God. The subjects realize it as their only duty and think that they have to love God, love their neighbors, and be obedient to their boss. All these parts are unified into one whole under the category of religion. Althusser further argues about Legal Ideology, which invokes the obligations not motivated only by the nature of man, but the obligations set through moral conscience or duty. It has total reliance on moral ideology. Even when following a law, the individuals act upon it out of mere "decency", not out of fear.

One of the oldest dominant institutions which practice its ideology is that of educational institutions. Althusser says that, at school, the children are divided according to labor. They are taught rules of good behavior or the behavior that

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should fit in their professions. This division of labor has its rules set by the dominant class. This reproduction of labor power requires the reproduction of submission along with the reproduction of skills. At the age of sixteen, children are subjected to the production process. They serve either as workers or as small peasants. They are provided with the ideology that suits their employment in a class society. This class society divides them into the "exploited," who are accompanied by political consciousness and civic responsibility, "agents of exploitation," who give orders to workers, "agents of repression," who enforce obedience, and "professional ideologists," who treat consciousness with a manipulative nature, often through blackmail.

These ISAs do not use violence to control the individuals; rather, they operate through abstract practices set up by no one but the dominant classes. This particular point sets up the Marxist view. Considering Althusser's perspectives, Nadia is subjected to this value system within the patriarchal structure that ultimately limits her agency.

Literature Review:

Several studies have been carried out regarding the selected novel (Hamid, 2017). These include treating Nadia as an inessential woman, the response to migration by the characters, and Nadia's revolt against the set standards of patriarchy. Foucault's "Panopticon", the postmodern case of migration, masculine-female and feminine-male, and many other such ideas have been discussed so far.

Michael Perfect (Perfect, 2019), in his article, argues not only about the way the two refugees cross the borders, but also about how their journey is portrayed by the technological elements. He himself goes on to cite Spencer Dew, who regards the mention of doors in the novel as one element of magical realism, as these doors are not only the physical doors, but also offer a magical element through which the characters can proceed further in their journey. The critic discusses the simultaneous occurrence of the displacement of human beings along with the description of technological elements. Supporting his stance, Michael narrates one of the instances when there is a statement when Saeed is sending an email, which is further being read by one of his clients. On the other hand, the lines of the novel present a man who enters a closet in Sydney. Further,

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whenever any type of communication takes place, there comes the direct mentioning of technology. Another perspective, which has been presented by Michael, is that of the use of the words "black holes in the fabric of the nation"; he points the geopolitical idea towards the refugees, where the refugees are taken as a threat to the nation-state. What Michael emphasizes is that Hamid's novel takes a different turn towards this conception as the borders that Nadia and Saeed cross are not seen by the authorities. Nazir Muhammad and Muhammad Zawar Khan (2021) discuss the way language shapes gender. Their article surveys the use of Critical Discourse Analysis, which shows power practiced through language. The language used to address Nadia in the novel is the language ascribed to the subordinate. They have narrated some of those linguistic terms, especially when one of the men calls her a "whore" while riding a motorbike. This use of language gives power to the one who uses it, in this case, conferring power on the male.

Tehmeena Yasmeen (2022) discusses how women are viewed in the Western world and the prejudices they face at the hands of the West. She explores how Nadia is judged by her black robe when even Saeed inquires about it because he sees that she neither offers prayer nor covers her head. On asking about its reason, Nadia replies: *So men don't fuck with me* (Hamid, 18). She portrays how postcolonial people face problems in the West because of being prejudiced against them. Another critic is Stefano Bellin (2022), who builds his approach on Michael Rothberg's "implicated subject", further paving the way for "disoriented empathy." Here, the disoriented sympathy refers to the two movements that the reader is liable to feel towards Hamid's novel. One is regarding the same feeling that is to be felt by the reader as they come across the different problems that the two refugees encounter throughout their journey. The second movement is regarding the disorientation or a type of uncertainty is also likely to be felt, at the same, by the readers, because although the readers feel the trials and difficulties undergone by Nadia, still there is the fact that readers are aware of the differences which exist as the readers also belong to such societies or communities where the same inequalities and injustices exist among the members. The empathy further hints at the fact that the same tribulations might be undergone by the reader himself, and such a refugee crisis may occur at their place. The article explores the

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theme of differentiation, which is undergone by refugees in general, as these discriminations occur because of the political criteria that set boundaries and borders among people.

Surrealism has also been dealt with in the novel by Yasir Naseem, Muhammad Shafiq, Aqsa Khan, and Muhammad Aqeel. They explore surrealist imagery and the power of imagination, taking Hamid's novel as a true representation of art and its aesthetics. Magical doors create a sense of suspicion and transcendence through which the characters cross different doors, but are never told how those doors work. Even their dreams are not simple dreams; those dreams create power dynamics in a way that they are unable to come close to each other, always creating some type of space between them. These different surrealist elements also depict the psychological state of the individuals (Naseem et al., 2022).

Nellie Sikaraudi (2023) analyzes the character of Nadia acting against the patriarchal standards. She adopts all the traits of a male, the way she adjusts herself within different environments on her journey, whereas Saeed is unable to mould himself with the changing situations. Nadia shows self-reliance and more confidence, which is actually expected of a man.

Nabeela Qayyum and others, in their article (Qayyum et al., 2024), discuss that Hamid uses language to provide equality to his characters, but at the same time, subordinating language has been used for Nadia, which reduces her to a non-human being by calling her a whore by a man in the novel.

Menel Amamou (2025) talks about homosexual individuals. In it, the researcher explores the fluid identity of Nadia. She shows that home is not a fixed thing, but rather something that changes over time, so we see Nadia adapting herself according to these changing homes or environments. The same is the case with identity; that is not fixed but is shaped. Nadia, in the beginning, is heterosexual, but at the end, she finds herself to be homosexual.

Some other researchers, like Khan et al. (2025), talk about societal norms, patriarchal structures, and resistance against gender norms. They discuss how societal norms forbid individuals from practicing liberty, and out of fear of being a social outcast, they are unable to develop relationships. Masculine-

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female, feminine-male, and sexual fluidity have also been discussed by those aforementioned researchers.

Research Objectives:

- To study how Nadia internalizes patriarchy through family.
- To explore the religious constraints on the protagonist.
- To investigate the role of Althusserian 'moral conscience' in dominating Nadia.
- To analyze how Nadia redefines the ideological interpellation.

Theoretical Framework:

Althusser's institutions, such as family, religion, education, politics, and culture, are responsible for shaping the identities of individuals. According to Althusser, ideology is an abstract concept that is enacted through institutions that have material existence, which shows that ideology does have a material existence. These ISAs do not use physical violence for the internalization of their values by the individuals. Concerning family as an ISA, Althusser says that it is a unit for the production of labor. This labor will be understood in the context of capitalistic ideology. Family, through its continuous biological reproduction of members, adds to this division of labor, which means that both genders are not to be treated equally. One of them is meant to be an unpaid worker, that is, the woman in the house. To strengthen this stance, Silvia Federici's *Wages Against Housework* (2025) can be taken into consideration, where she says that unpaid work is not viewed as a political issue but rather considered to be obligatory. The unpaid work keeps a woman subordinate to a man. This is what is expected of Nadia when she aims to leave her family. Family, being a patriarchal unit, does not allow her to do this paid work. Silvia Fredrici says that housework itself is a tool or an element of capitalism. The smiling, cooking for her husband, and looking after the children collectively contribute to maintaining that capitalistic ideology where one is not being paid for all these acts (Fredrici, 1974, p. 82). In Nadia's case, she is meant to be submissive to the male authority within her family and exhibit the characteristics of an obedient daughter. Not only family, but religion also wants to subjugate her as an individual. According to Althusser, individuals are taught to internalize the capitalistic ideology of the

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Subject (authority). Religion as an ISA persuades individuals to love God, love their neighbor, and be obedient to their boss. It further paves the way for some of the moral values. It is reflected in the character of Nadia, who is meant to be obedient in the face of patriarchal society, be obedient to her parents, and act upon the social norms. In short, these institutions, through capitalistic ideology, try to redefine a person's morality. Even when the individuals think that they are acting according to the set standards of their own, they are, in reality, not acting according to their free will. Nadia is not given the right to choose her sexuality. These power dynamics imposed by different institutions keep her indecisive about her own sexuality. Initially, she was heterosexual, but later turned out to be homosexual. This heterosexuality has also been imposed upon her by the institutions, again creating gender discrimination. Religion as an ISA plays an important role in it, which is to be analyzed in a separate section of Textual Analysis.

Further, Althusser's other important argument is related to the moral conscience, which permeates itself into the minds of individuals. According to him, the standards are to be acted upon by the individuals out of mere decency. In the case of Nadia, far different instances, such as riding a motorbike and living apart from her family, are considered to be acts against these moral values. She tries to fit into the patriarchal norms, which actually create class division, promoting gender discrimination. The division of gender by the dominant class through the invisible ideology leads Nadia to revolt against this gender discrimination. The way Nadia is not given her free will to act in society while deciding on her sexuality, even her role as an obedient woman, and also a religious subject in the face of the Subject, are some of the core issues to be discussed. The research study implies qualitative research, that is, theoretical and interpretive. Tools for data collection are the original text: e-book: *Exit West*, consisting of 150 pages, published on March 7, 2017, by Hamish Hamilton (UK), Riverhead Books (US), which acts as a primary source. Dialogues, descriptions, actions of the characters, and scenes to support the stance have been incorporated. Secondary sources include critical essays, research articles, and critical analyses concerning the current core issue to be dealt with. Along with it, e-books have also been read as a reference for Althusser's ISAs. The research work has posed the following questions as the crux of this analytical study:

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i. In what ways does the family as an ideological state apparatus contribute to the subordination of Nadia?

ii. How does the black robe, as an oppressive religious symbol, undermine Nadia's liberty?

iii. What is the role of Althusserian "moral conscience" in internalizing societal norms?

iv. How does Nadia encounter ideological interpellation?

Textual Analysis:

Family as an Ideological State Apparatus

This section deals with the role of the family as an Althusserian ideological state apparatus in subordinating the protagonist, Nadia. Initially, it can be seen that Nadia lives with her family, and among them, her father has established authority as a patriarch. She is expected to be an obedient daughter, not only obedient to her parents but also passive and submissive to the patriarchal society. Family is the base unit for a child, from where the internalization of ideology starts.

Being a part of a patriarchal society, she has to act upon the same standards. Unpaid work is what is expected from a woman within a patriarchal society. The protagonist decides to live separately from her family after completing her degree from the university, but her idea of living independently is not welcomed by her parents. On her decision, the family members, including her father, mother, and sister, are terror-stricken. The main perspective that was hard to accept was that she was unmarried. If she were married, it might be possible for her to move anywhere with her husband, but the idea of being unmarried and still having the idea of a separate dwelling surprised everyone. Her constant questioning was perceived as a type of revolt against the patriarchal society. This is evident in the lines of the novel as well, where Hamid makes it clear when Nadia announces the decision that she has taken regarding her independent living. Her decision was a blow to the family members (Hamid, 20). The use of the word "physical violence" (Hamid, 20) comes up to Althusser's concept of ISA, which does not use violence to implement it upon the individuals; rather, there comes the element of internalization. The same internalization has been done on the part of Nadia. Being a woman, Nadia is not encouraged or supported in her decision, due to which, when she starts to live separately from her family, she initially feels as

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if she has made a wrong decision. The thing that strikes her family is the fact that a woman is not supposed to be paid for her work. Women do the unpaid work, which is appreciated by patriarchal society, but the paid work, except for housework, is taken by patriarchy as a revolt. She had this guilt for going against her family's will. This guilt, which she faces, is imposed by her own family, which sees a woman born only to act according to the family's tradition, which is the traditions imposed by the patriarchal society; these ideologies of her family want to keep her totally subordinated and passive in the face of these standards. Just in this context, one important point to be noted is that there is a connection between family and all other related institutions of society, such as religion. Family is the only unit that prepares an individual for accepting all the ideologies imposed by those institutions. In Nadia's room, some religious symbols can be seen, such as pictures of religious verses and such other elements.

Another incident that comes under the category of family as an ISA is her worry for Saeed's father. Family teaches a woman to be caring and sensitive. The same characteristics are exhibited by Nadia when she decides to be a comfort to them after Saeed's mother passed away. She is not paid for her work in their house. It is evident through the lines of the text, as well as when Nadia goes to Saeed's apartment at his mother's death, and offers every type of work. Here, she devotes herself to household chores and aims to provide comfort to them. (Hamid, 54)

Here, again, the prospect of unpaid labor as one of the elements subordinating women can be seen. Escaping from her own home, but now coming into Saeed's family, she is treated the same way. It shows that all these standards are at work at all levels. This attitude does not seem strange to Nadia, which again shows her attitude towards internalizing these capitalistic ideologies, that is, constructed by the elite class of society, that aim to keep women subordinated, creating gender discrimination.

Saeed's father converses with Nadia to entrust her with his son's responsibility. Saeed's father expects Nadia to take care of his son and be available for him emotionally. What catches the eye regarding this established norm is that Nadia is expected to do much for Saeed's father. Although she is not directly related to their family, still being a woman, she is expected to be caring, loyal, and available

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for a man whenever he wants to have her. This again creates the gender hierarchy. Another point is that without taking her due consent, Saeed's father tries to impose the responsibility of marriage upon Nadia (Hamid, 67). In short, the role of the family as an ideological state apparatus has an influence on Nadia. The gender discrimination that takes place in the novel results in subordinating her, which is done within this institution, the family.

Religion as an Ideological State Apparatus

Religion, according to Althusser, also acts as an ISA, which makes its individuals subjects, who have to be and at the same time act submissive in the face of God. In their love for God, they are expected to be obedient to their neighbors, their boss, and their family members. In the case of Nadia, she has to align herself with the same individuals, for the difference is that she has to be submissive to the patriarchal system. In the novel, it can be seen that she is misjudged because of her black robe. The black robe, a symbol of religion, has actually been set up by society to act as such. The researchers do not side with any religion, but since the character discussed so far is a Muslim character, Nadia, although she wears a black robe, she does not cover her head. Religion as an ISA is responsible for undermining her liberty by not allowing her to act according to her own will; rather, she has to mould her personality according to what awaits her in the form of patriarchal standards. Religion has to be practiced while living in that patriarchal system. So both the religion and patriarchy combine to subordinate Nadia. This conception regarding religion is shown in the text when Saeed sees Nadia walking through the parking area. She does not cover her head with any cloth, but rather covers her head with a helmet, further preparing herself to ride her bike (Hamid, 11). She is not only judged to this particular extent, but this is extended when one of the agents of patriarchy, Saeed, inquires about the reason for wearing that robe. This patriarchal system inquires about a woman's appearance. Through the tag of religion, she is actually controlled by men. It does not specify a single man, but even those men who are not directly related to her try to impose their own perceptions upon her. At their first meeting, Saeed starts inquiring about Nadia's dress, which is a black robe. This black robe does not try to subordinate Nadia to an event only; rather, this black robe

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creates a hindrance for her during her working hours also. The reason is that a black robe is worn by Muslim women, and they usually cover their heads also, but as illustrated in the above-mentioned lines of the text, when Nadia tries to use this black robe according to her own requirements, she is often scorned for it. Even her religious actions are criticized based on this black robe. This can be seen when Saeed inquires about Nadia's wearing that black robe, although she does not offer a prayer (Hamid, 18). It shows how religious ideology has made its own set of standards, where individuals are considered to be subjects in the face of a higher authority. This is all internalization on the part of the individuals, and in Nadia's case, she is someone who does not ultimately respond to these ideologies. Althusser questions what moral values determine how individuals are allowed to live their lives. Nadia feels safe within herself. What this pinpoints in the context of religion as an ISA is that the black robe has made Nadia totally dependent upon itself, that she considers it to be sending a signal (Hamid, 77) to everyone whenever she is harassed. Even when Nadia wants to reveal her sexuality, she is unable to do so because doing so would put a religious taboo upon her, and she would be ostracized from this society. This aspect is evident during her visit to Mykonos, where a girl treats her wounded arm. Nadia feels at home with her. She dreamt about her and had amorous feelings, not sisterly. She never felt the same for Saeed (Hamid, 95).

Another incident that highlights the influence of religion upon individuals in judging others and subordinating individuals is when Nadia is scorned by Saeed again when she is there with him at his father's funeral. It occurred when she visited Saeed's home, and there she felt as if all the actions and even Saeed's prayer were directed towards her (Hamid, 122).

Althusser's Moral Conscience

Althusser's concept of moral conscience is responsible for subordinating Nadia. Moral conscience regards individuals as internalizing the norms of society. Individuals think as if whatever they are doing is being done according to their own will. It imposes some restrictions upon them or tries to direct the lives of individuals towards some specific aim or motive. The individuals think that whatever they are abiding by these ideologies is right.

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Nadia, out of mere moral conscience, is unable to resist the patriarchal norms, even when a man harasses her in a bank, tries to come into physical contact with her by pushing his fingers between her legs, she still does not respond. She seems to be afraid in that situation. Why is this so? Because the patriarchal ideology has taught her to remain silent and consider this her fate. Being a female, she has to bow herself in the face of societal values. She does not consider this scene of harassment a violent act because she is driven to act as such through the working of these ideologies (Hamid, 30).

Saeed's father imposes the responsibility of being Saeed's companion, further marrying him, bearing him children, and *not failing him* (both Saeed and his father). She is not given her free will to decide; it seems as if the patriarchal agent has imposed a decision upon her. She is actually being directed by the patriarchal agent, as women are supposed to be submissive, subordinate, and obedient to men (Hamid, 54). Nadia is seen taking responsibility for most of the actions that are taking place during their migration period. One of these is when Saeed is offering prayer, and she thinks as if whatever he says or does, even his praying, is directed towards her. She thinks as if she is responsible for bringing his parents' deaths, or maybe she is the reason for his inability to go back to his country (Hamid, 27).

Moral conscience deals with the laws that are made normal for the individual and which the individual has to follow. Saeed, being a patriarchal agent, enters into Nadia's thoughts. This is not only about the thoughts of a man being entreated into a female mind, but rather it is about the patriarchal ideology that is entering into a female agency, and, for Nadia, initially, it is not altogether wrong or a thing to be resisted. Nadia, sitting at her work desk, taking her breakfast, and even when she is busy with some other work, is occupied by the thoughts of Saeed (Hamid, 31). She does not take these things as extraordinary; rather, she acts as a door through which any patriarchal ideology can easily enter. Some other instances concern the sexuality of Nadia. Religion and moral conscience commingle and try to influence her. Whenever she is yearning for physical intimacy, it is Saeed who stops Nadia from coming close to him. When Nadia tries to seduce Saeed towards her, he insists on carrying out such actions of intimacy after marriage (Hamid, 41). It is an emphasis on moral conscience

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that people have to act upon those laws or those standards which have been imposed by society, which shows that she has to respond to this physical contact only when he allows her to do so. Nadia herself suppresses her own emotions at this time because she also thinks that whatever he is saying might be right.

Even her living alone is not considered to be suitable by the patriarchal ideology. She is treated as a sensitive creature who might be harmed by anyone, so she should be with a man. The same ideology is internalized and welcomed by Nadia when she thinks that Saeed's mentality regarding an unmarried woman living alone is unsafe and right, although at times, she does not want to admit it (Hamid, 53).

Nadia's Response to Ideological Interpellation

Nadia resists the ideological interpellation boldly. Initially, she internalizes the patriarchal norms, but as she advances, it can be seen that she undergoes a transition. Even at the start of the novel, Nadia appears to revolt against these set standards. How she resists these norms is the way she uses the black robe for her own protection, not letting it completely isolate her from herself. This black robe poses a question in the minds of men. When Saeed inquires about her wearing this robe, she answers ultimately, and without hesitation: "So men don't fuck with me" (Hamid, 18). Such a bold answer is actually unexpected from a woman living in a patriarchal society. Even when Nadia gives the black robe to Saeed so that he can hide himself from being seen when meeting Nadia, this same black robe seems to be used by Nadia to establish her control over Saeed. Nadia exhibits her homosexuality on open terms. She comes into an intimate relationship with a girl from Mykonos. At the end of their journey, while she is with Saeed, she is still absorbed in the nostalgia of her meeting with that girl. This sign of homosexuality is evident when Nadia pleases herself while Saeed is asleep or when he is not present in the apartment (Hamid, 129). Here, it can be clearly seen that religious ideology, which interpellates the individuals and makes them subjects in the face of a higher authority, has been negated by Nadia. Her response does not limit itself just to this point; she exercises an authoritative tendency over the males also. When the Nigerian women gather for a type of meeting, it is Nadia who is given priority by an older Nigerian woman (Hamid, 98). Here, Nadia seems to be practicing her female agency in a bold sense, which had been suppressed by the

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male-dominated society. Nigerian men are not given due importance there; Nadia is being given priority over everyone else. Another important point to be highlighted is that of the weed, when Nadia smokes while sitting with Saeed. In another incident, Nadia again brings a drug. While taking the weed, Nadia feels a little paranoid, and she even compares this weed to the weed that she inhaled back at her apartment when they used to be in their own country, before migration (Hamid, 127). Her initial resistance actually starts with going against herself, the dependent woman. After completing her graduation, she decides to live apart from her family, especially on lonely nights without any male companion (Hamid, 32).

Conclusion:

This paper explores Nadia's oppression at the hands of ideological institutions and her active resistance. These ideologies are initially adopted but then neglected by her. She uses different strategies to defy the control of these power structures. The motives discussed are the working of family and religion as ISAs, the role of moral conscience in controlling and defining Nadia, and the last motive is her rebellion. She revolted against these ideological apparatuses actively, reclaiming her individuality.

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